Popularising latest techniques

†3357. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have different provisions through different mediums to make the farmers of the country aware about the latest techniques of farming;

(b) if so, the details of these mediums and provisions;

(c) whether it is also a fact that inspite of the above efforts, 60 per cent farmers of the country are unaware about the latest techniques; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof and whether Government have decided to make current measures more effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Provisions have been made through different mediums to make the farmers of the country aware about the latest techniques of farming, *inter-alia*, under the following schemes of the Ministry of Agriculture:

— Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension (2004);

— Kisan Call Centres (2004);

— Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms (2005);

— Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs);

The figures in brackets indicate the year in which these schemes were started.

(c) and (d) As per National Sample Survey Organization Report No. 499 based on survey conducted in the year 2003, 40% of farmer households are accessing modern agricultural technologies. Progressive farmers, Input dealers, Radio and Television were found to be some of the major information sources.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The most of the schemes in part (b) of the reply above are recent schemes started to make information dissemination on the latest techniques more effective. New KVKs are also making contribution in this regard.

Standing Committee on Agriculture

3358. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formed a separate Standing Committee on Agriculture for improving conditions of this sector;

(b) if so, whether this Committee would look into the root cause of farmers suicides and strive to alleviate poverty by providing them with better infrastructure;

(c) whether any suggestion has been made that Centre should invest in rural sector and make massive efforts to attract and retain youth in villages;

(d) within what time this Committee had submitted its report to Government; and

(e) the steps taken to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (e) An Agriculture Coordination Committee has been recently constituted under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister, to evolve a systematic approach to policy formulation on issues pertainings to agriculture and to promote inter-sectoral and inter-departmental coordination in planning and implementation.

Separately, the National Commission on Farmers was set up by Government in February, 2004 to examine and recommend policies, programmes and measures on various issues confronting Indian Farmers and to suggest appropriate interventions for improving the economic viability and sustainability of diversified agriculture including horticulture, livestock, dairy and fisheries. The Commission was later reconstituted in November, 2004 and assigned a revised set of terms of reference.

The reconstituted Commission submitted its First Interim Report in December, 2004 and the Second Interim Report in August-September, 2005. These Reports suggest several measures including step up in public investment for improving the agriculture sector.